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The Director of Central Intelligence

Washington, D.C. 20505

NIC-04237-87

10 December 1987

Senior Review Panel

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence
Deputy Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Senior Review Panel Comments on Draft
Concept Paper and Terms of Reference (TOR)
for SNIE 56-2-87: The Philippines: Problems
and Prospects for the Aquino Government,
internally dated 1 December 1987

1. The Panel considers the present drafts significant improvements over their predecessors. We think they strike a much better balance among Mrs. Aquino's personality and leadership style, Manila-focused issues, and more basic forces and trends at work throughout the Philippines. The Concept Paper generally addresses the chief issues, although the Key Questions could be more sharply focused and precise. The TOR seem to us excessively schematic, making it difficult to tell from the outline and a number of single-term captions how various critical issues will be treated. An effort to give more specific content to the TOR outline at this preliminary stage would, we think, be rewarding. Beyond these general observations, we have a few supplementary comments.

2. We are entirely agreed on the importance of this SNIE and will be especially concerned to see how some of the dynamic factors and forces for change, which we regarded as essential in our comments on earlier drafts (November 3 and November 13) are projected and woven into the eventual text. We continue to believe that the following matters, for example, are critical to the Estimate:

- ~~trends and dynamics of insurgency in both urban and rural areas.~~
- ~~leadership, areas of growth, and sources of support for the NPA.~~
- ~~appraisal of civilian/military counterinsurgency programs and armed forces effectiveness.~~

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- intellectual currents, including liberation theology and dependency theory, and their impact on the Catholic church and its leaders.
- the problems of national consolidation in a land of 7,100 islands and multiple languages where the transport and communications infrastructure has been steadily dilapidating.
- forces and trends in a confluence threatening a flood of administrative tensions and problems for Aquino--such as civil-military tensions, coalition dissolution, widespread corruption, and rural unrest in the absence of significant land reform.

3. Such factors suggest to us that the Key Questions might be more helpfully phrased in terms of the projection of forces and trends with which the Philippine government must cope rather than as longer-term threats to the Aquino government. Many of the forces and trends are not necessarily "threats" in a conventional sense, but they establish the critical factors in Philippine prospects.


4. Implications for US Policy. To maximize the policy relevance of the estimate, we think that the estimate, in its concluding sections, should distinguish among nation-building problems (which may require a generation or more), a range of medium-term issues which may be amenable to early but limited progress, and a few specific key problems--e.g., the economy, rural development, military effectiveness and counterinsurgency strategy--where substantial early advances could be made. We believe that this can be done within an estimative framework; that it should not involve specific policy recommendations; and that it might helpfully clarify policymaking options.


William Leonhart


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Richard L. Walker

cc: AC/NIC (Mr. Hutchinson)
NIO for East Asia

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